



Senate Judiciary Committee Approves Resolution
Honoring Smokey Bear on 60th Anniversary
July 20, 2004

Washington, DC – The U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee today honored Smokey Bear for helping to protect our Nation's forests for 60 years and approved a resolution designating August 9, 2004 as Smokey Bear's 60th anniversary.

The resolution, which was sponsored by Senators Gordon Smith (R-OR), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Conrad Burns (R-MT), and Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), also requested President Bush to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

“This very moment there are serious wildland fires burning in Southern California, just north of Los Angeles,” Senator Feinstein said. **“Smokey’s message of vigilance in preventing catastrophic fires is, if anything, more important than ever today in California and throughout the West.”**

Keeping in line with the changing views on forest policy, the resolution also states that Smokey Bear's message of vigilance can be applied to the need to:

- Remove unnatural accumulations of hazardous fuels from public forests;
- Clear defensible space around homes and escapes routes in wildland-urban interface zones;
- Suppress forest fires that threaten communities or valuable natural resources.

In 1944, Smokey was introduced as a campaign symbol and chief messenger to promote the prevention of accidental forest fires. The actual Smokey the Bear was a cub found clinging to a tree after a 1950 forest fire near Capitan, New Mexico. This cub, who became known as Smokey Bear, was nursed back to health and lived a long and happy life in the National Zoo in Washington, as a living counterpart to the fire prevention symbol.

The Smokey Bear campaign is the longest running public service campaign in the history of the United States. For 60 years, the Smokey Bear campaign has been dedicated to educating Americans of all ages and particularly America's youth about the need for vigilance concerning forest health and wildfires.

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